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ABSTRACT

This study examined comments from a qualitative study regarding African American students' level of adjustment at predominantly white institutions. A phenomenological approach and ethno-methodology provided the framework to focus on what African American students experience and how they interpret their experiences in what they perceive as a hostile environment. Eighteen black students were interviewed between October 1991 and July 1993. Also interviewed were four administrators who worked with minority students in an academic support capacity. Analysis revealed three major themes into which students' remarks and concerns could be categorized: identity (and how it gets sorted out), social interactions, and academic interactions. Black identity was an issue for each student either on an individual or group level. Socializing with and in the African American reference group was surprising for many of the students though most students found support groups in the first two or three semesters. These support groups grew in importance as the years continued. Data indicated a tendency toward "self assessment" at some time between the second semester of the sophomore and the first semester of the junior year. (Contains 56 references.) (JB)

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Safe Havens for African American Students: Finding support on a white campus

by

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BACKGROUND TO STUDY

Most higher education institutions today actively recruit African Americans, and students of other minority groups. Despite active recruitment and increased enrollments of minority undergraduates, graduation rates are still disproportionately low. In 1990, African-Americans, who made up 9.6 percent of the total college enrollment, received 5.8 percent for the baccalaureate degrees awarded nationwide. The percentage for all minorities receiving bachelor's degrees in 1990 was only 13.1 percent. The good news is that this represents an increase of 5.8 percent from 1989 to 1990 (American Council on Education, 1992 Status Report). Institutions are taking a critical look at what is happening with their student populations. Who is getting in? Who completes their degree? Who is dropping out, and why?

In the past ten years three major concerns have been incorporated in studies of Black (African American) students on predominantly white college and university campuses:

1. Their social and economic characteristics;
2. Their levels of adjustment in predominantly white institutions;
3. Their academic success (attrition rate) in these institutions.

(Allen, Epps and Haniff 1991, 5)

Allen (1991) in *College in Black and White* refers specifically to the works of "a collaborative network of Black scholars" (National Study of Black College Students) doing research on Black students in higher education. Scholars used an interdisciplinary approach to provide Black and other students with professional

training and experience in all phases of social-science research. The results of this training and commitment were several dissertations, graduate student presentations nationally, and publications including graduate students as co-authors.

Since the seventies, there have been empirical data from the National Study of Black College Students Project, their students, and colleagues.[1] During this time, quantitative studies of retention and attrition have also done as well as theoretical models of college students' development, involvement and interaction[2], and significant comprehensive 20 year reviews of this body of literature[3].

Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) acknowledge that "the research methodologies have almost exclusively been quantitative and positivistic in their orientation" (Pascarella and Terenzini 1992, p. 32). They further suggest that an "important direction of future research on college impact should be a greater dependence on naturalistic and qualitative methodologies" (p. 634).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Today, institutions *are* concerned with providing an adequate learning environment for all students. However, most institutions do not have a full understanding of what it takes to create that environment for an ethnic and culturally diverse student body. Several researchers have made the recommendation for further research using qualitative methods and naturalistic inquiry particularly when studying ethnic and culturally different students. I have taken this recommendation to gain a better understanding of what African American students say they experience on a predominantly white university campus.

This paper will share comments, from a qualitative study, related to the issues of African American students' level of adjustment in predominantly white institutions. A phenomenological approach and ethnomethodology provide the framework to focus on what African American students experience, and *how they interpret their experiences* in what they perceive as a hostile environment. Four initial concerns have driven this research: (1) How do Black students perceive their college experiences at a private, research university? Is the experience one that fosters or inhibits educational progress and persistence? (2) What is the importance of the Summer Institute (a pre-freshman summer bridge program) on the decision to persist to graduation, as perceived by these African American students? What do the students see as the benefits of coming to college early? (3) What are some of the reasons, as perceived by these students, why African American students persist in predominantly white institutions? (4) Are there common themes among the students' experiences. If so, could these themes provide insights for developing interventions to increase the graduation rate of African American students?

Purpose for this study grew out of concern for the decreasing numbers of Black students graduating from four year predominantly white institutions in spite of increased enrollments of students from under-represented groups.

RELATED LITERATURE

Interaction in Higher Education

There is an abundance of studies, books, articles and, reviews of the literature on the topics of student recruitment, retention and interaction in higher education (Pascarella and Terenzini 1991 ; Tinto 1994) . Most researchers and practitioners agree there is a need for further in-depth inquiry into the experiences of the individual ethnic groups: African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, etc. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991} suggest that future theory-based research should consider indirect as well as direct effects: "We still strongly suspect that students' individual characteristics frequently mediate the impact of college; not all students benefit equally from the same experience" (p. 634).

Prior to when Tinto (1975) first postulated that a student's persistence was related to the degree to which a student was integrated into the college's social and academic communities, most studies were related to integration as a result of desegregation and the Civil Rights Movement. Parallel to the Tinto model (1975, 1987), however, were African American and other Black scholars, from many disciplines, studying reasons why Black children at all levels of education have difficulty learning, adjusting and staying in predominantly white institutions (Ogbu 1978 ; Blackwell 1981; Willie 1981; Astin 1982; Thomas 1984; Stikes 1984; Allen 1984; Asante and Noor Al-Deen 1984; Nettles, et al. 1985; Richardson and Bender, 1985).

Other theorists (Ajzen and Fishbein 1972, 1977; Bean, 1983; Bentler and Speckart 1979, 1981) contend that there is a strong relationship between attitudes, intentions and behavior and, how students manage a new (college) environment . More recently (Bean 1990) put forth a model which looks at the external factors such as family encouragement, high school peers, community support, and how the strength of the students' background plays a significant role in affecting both attitudes and behavior. As well, scholars have begun to look at the consequence of *special treatment* of Black athletes in higher education (Adler and Adler 1991). In the 1990s, several African American and other scholars of color, have written articles and edited anthologies presenting the multiple, and historical perspectives on issues effecting Blacks' interaction in higher education (Allen et al. 1991; Altbach and Lomotey 1991; Gibson and Ogbu 1991; Lang and Ford 1992; Willie, Garibaldi and Reed 1991).

Mow and Nettles (1990) recounts Pascarella's 1985 test of the Tinto (1975) model. In Pascarella's nine-year study of attrition among black and white students, he found similarities regarding the effects of background characteristics and their relationship to persistence in higher education. This study also showed significant, positive association of academic and social integration to persistence among both groups of students. Mow and Nettles (1990) make the point that "social integration was equally important to - perhaps even more important than - academic integration as an influence on ultimate degree completion for black students" (p. 84).

Fit and Identity

Referring to the theory of "institutional fit", discussed both by Astin, 1975) and Cope and Hannah, 1975, Astin, 1982) found that minorities with the best chance of persistence had seven characteristics: (1) high entrance GPA and test scores; (2) well-developed study habits; (3) a high academic ability self esteem; (4) a relatively affluent and well-educated family background; (5) an integrated high school experience; (6) on campus living arrangements; and (7) no outside job. These findings were based on Astin's Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) survey data from students' first two years of undergraduate work. Data gathered from my students, who entered college in 1989 and graduated in 1993, helps us to develop a better understanding of how these characteristics play out in the four years to graduation.

Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) state that many student characteristics have been overlooked within the current framework of attrition model research. Weidman (1989) found that sociologically based persistence research places emphasis on the general socialization process in college rather than on the attributes of the individual undergoing socialization. He advocates for research that deals with the affective dimensions of undergraduate socialization; paying special attention to "special student populations" e.g. women, minorities, and returning adults (Weidman, 1989).

There is also the area of psycho social development of traditional college-aged students which suggest that there are natural developmental processes students go through (Chickering 1969; Cross 1978; Perry 1981). For the population of this study it

will also be necessary to look at the literature on "Black Identity", and "coping skills" of minorities in a majority culture (Spencer, 1985; Fordam and Ogbu, 1986; Helms, 1986; Helms and Parham, 1992; Cross 1991).

Yonai, (1991), along with Pascarella and Terenzini, (1991 and Nettles, 1991), recommends further study of persistence of the various ethnic groups; giving more attention to the different groups of students and, post-freshman students; to extend the data collection over the length of retention and/or persistence to graduation. It is important that the students' perspectives be investigated.

METHODOLOGY

Researcher as instrument

Central to any research are the dual roles played by the researcher as both investigator and learner (Glesne and Pleshkin, 1992). Concurring with (Wolcott, 1982), Miles and Huberman (1994) explain:

> The researcher attempts to capture data on the perspective of local actors "from the inside," through a process of deep attentiveness, of empathetic understanding (*Verstehen*), and of suspending or "bracketing" preconceptions about the topics under discussion (emphasis in original, (Miles and Huberman, 1994 p. 6)

My role in this study presented challenges. I would be an African American student interviewing other African American students. Seemingly such interviews would be simple. It should be easy to establish rapport. In this case, however, I am an older

African American woman graduate student seeking to interview undergraduates aged 18-24 also of the African diaspora. I had concerns.

Initially, my concerns were about myself: my age, being a mother of children older than these students. How would I approach the students? Would I be biased and have preconceived ideas about their experiences? Then I worried about how the students would perceive me. Would the students relate to me, be open with me? Or would they see me as a mother or authority figure? Would they see me as a fellow student?

When I entered college in 1983, I had raised my family, I did not have the background of a typical adolescent going off to college. I had never lived in a residence hall, nor had to stand up to a professor at such an early stage of intellectual development (although, I have had tense encounters with professors, as a mature woman). Already I was comparing my interviewees' experiences to my own. This was not the purpose of my research. I wanted a clear view of their perceptions and interpretations. Hence, my "insider" identification could be a hindrance as well as an advantage.

The issue of being a Black woman brings with it biases because I enter into the research with a sense of what the African American youth might be going through. There is little, if anything, I can do about such bias except to recognize it and remain sensitive as to how it might affect the research. So, as I began this project I am taking a minute to record for my journal what I think the typical African American (or any) undergraduate is like:

♦ full of personal pride, dignity having graduated and made it through the admission process,

♦ having a sense of accomplishment in their own community, (in many cases being the first in their family to go to college; in others having to follow a family tradition of "making it", "overcoming the odds")

♦ having a sense of determination, believing that they have to do well because so much is depending on them,

♦ having a sense of self control about being grown and on their own (euphoria), and apprehension, all in one

This exercise proved useful because it helped me see my biases about the study and understand their origins. I am a proud African American woman, proud of the dignity of my community as its members have struggled to document an impressive array of achievements. This is how I feel -so much so- that I need to be watchful of any move to project these feelings onto the students.

Approaches

Phenomenological researchers attempt to understand the meaning of events and interactions of ordinary people in specific situations. According to {Bogdan and Biklen 1982}, "ethnomethodology ...refers to the study of how individuals create and understand their daily lives - their method of accomplishing everyday life" (p. 37). What I am trying to learn from Black students on a predominantly white campus is how do these particular students accomplish everyday life on campus? My interest is

in generating theory from empirical data, as well as verifying or confirming preexisting theory. I want to document the student voices and perspectives of campus life experiences. A grounded theory approach is one way to frame qualitative research.

Grounded theory is a process; "a general method of comparative analysis" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Glaser and Strauss looked at grounded theory in a broader sense than did Robert Merton, one of the fathers of social science research. (Merton, 1949) considered that verifications found in the data served to modify existing theory or, because these verifications were unanticipated they came as a surprise to the researcher. Whereas, Glaser and Strauss (1967) take the position that one must make "an initial, systematic discovery of the theory from the data of social research"; they also believe that "generating grounded theory is a way of arriving at theory suited to its supposed uses." In sociology there are five interrelated jobs that theory must perform: (1) to facilitate prediction and explanation of behavior; (2) to assist the advance of theory in sociology; (3) to "be usable in practical applications" by researchers; (4) to provide a way to view data; (5) "to guide and provide a style for research on particular behaviors" (p. 3).

Theory grounded in the data is so clearly related and stated so that it cannot usually be disputed or refuted. Credibility comes from the data and the process of analysis. Opportunistic uses of theory are less likely to occur when theory is logically and inductively drawn from the data. "Grounded theory is derived from data and

then illustrated by characteristic examples of data" (p. 5). The credibility comes from the data and the process of analysis.

Data Collection

Students for this study were chosen initially from African American students who began their college studies during the summer of 1989, in the Summer Institute Program, using a "snowball sampling" whereby students were recommended to me by their peers. Other students were added using purposive selection from among students who had started in 1989 but had not had the pre-college experience. A total of twenty students were interviewed from October 1991 thru July 1993. .

Chronologically, the student participants *should* have been juniors during the 1991-92 school year when the interviews began. Some were second semester sophomores; two were advanced seniors. Second interviews were conducted in the Spring and Summer of 1993, with two students being interviewed in New York City, following their graduation. Also interviewed were four (4) administrators who worked with "minority" students in an academic support capacity. They provided institutional perspectives in relationship to the students.

Open-ended and in-depth interviews were used as the primary techniques for gathering the data. The open-ended nature of the questions allows the subjects to answer from their own frame of reference rather than from one structured by prearranged questions (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). Questions were asked about each year separately e.g. "Tell me about your experiences in your Freshman year."; "Now, tell me about your freshman year, academically."; "What was your social life like in

your sophomore year."; "As you look back on your senior year, what stands out for you." More focused questions were asked during the second interviews with nine of the twenty students, and the four administrators. Supplementary data were gathered from official, historical documents and, students' pre-freshman journals written as part of the Summer Institute program.

During the second interviews, questions were still open-ended but were focused e.g. "Tell me about your interactions within your classrooms." "With your roommate." "What did you mean when you said...?" "Talk a little more about..." Questions were posed to clarify and understand previous issues or areas brought up by the students. One focus was to better understand the interactions of African American students within their own reference group. Another was understanding the variety of interactions with students, faculty, administrators and staff who are and, are not African American.

Pilot Study

The pilot study was completed in December of 1992. Only data from the first seven student-interview transcripts were analyzed at that time. This pilot study looked at the importance of the Summer Institute program from the students' perspectives. Pilot data speak very clearly about what benefits the students perceive from having the opportunity of the Summer Institute experience. Disadvantages, if any, were determined only after analysis of the data from those students who *did not* have the pre-college experience.

A total of 20 students were interviewed : 18 were "Black" (of the African diaspora and/or bi-racial), two (2) were White [These two were part of the Summer Institute Program]. Of the 18 Black students, ten (10) had participated in the Summer Institute 1989 pre-college program. The other eight (8) students did not have the pre-college experience but did enter in the Fall of 1989. Nine second interviews were conducted as time permitted in that last year.

Data Analysis

Data were coded as the tapes were transcribed to inform the on-going research. The "constant comparative" method was used in developing new codes as data became available from subsequent interviews. Where possible, transcripts were shared with participants to clarify content, intent, and interpretation. During all discussions of the data pseudonyms are used to disallow association or identification of any of the student participants. A qualitative analysis computer program, AQUAD, will be used to further synthesize the data.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

Students were very candid with me in sharing their experiences. An advantage to being an older African American woman, a graduate student at the university was that it allowed me to easily establish a rapport and conduct my interviews in a non-threatening atmosphere. Most interviews were conducted in quiet student areas of the Student Center or Library, during the afternoon or evening.

Some Concerns

Review of research on the college student (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991) has shown that students have many concerns which, although not classified as academic, do have a significant bearing on their ability to do their academic work. This study used open-ended questions like "Tell me about your experience here in your freshman year" to obtain a variety of information about the things students have on their minds. For example JAY remembers:

> *You're trying to center yourself but you're a freshman. You really don't know. So, I could have done a lot more but.... It was basically being a social butterfly freshman year. Concentrated on hanging out, going out and that being a part of the group.*

JOHANNA, not being a partier, remembers:

> *I think a lot of things affect you academically that you wouldn't really expect to affect you. Like I went through this before in my freshman year...my roommates were white...and that affected me academically, because it wasn't like I was out all night partying. But it was like the pressure of the world was on me. I'm like, why am I surrounded by whiteness. I mean, I really had a problem with that. It was like they would go to bed at 11 o'clock. I'd be up studying and it was like, why do I have to study so hard. Why...and then [them] getting the 4.0's and they're in bed. Why is that? Then, you have to realize that some people have to study more than others. It's not that "Oh, I'm black, I'm stupid", or anything like that.*

And Tirae put it like this:

I was the only black student, and I was female. I remember my TA saying to me, "You know if you need any help, just let me know. Don't hesitate to call me." She was pacifying me. So I was just like, okay, I'm going to show this woman. I was like, "You know maybe she is trying to be helpful - but at the same time she is really making me mad"..... I ended up getting an A in the course.

Difference

The data indicate that these African American students have many experiences in common, because of the Summer Institute (SI) program; because of their blackness; because of their daily experiences on a white campus. One student talks about the privilege of SI, which made them feel special.

We had exchanged phone numbers [at a minority recruiting event] so I had been speaking with some people before I actually got here. So by the time I got to Summer Institute, I already had some friends. So by that time we were building on already started, already made friendships... Also, probably the best in my summer institute was a class called REM [college learning strategies taken by all SI students]... [the teacher] made us go to the library to learn how to use the library. Although the system has changed from the time I entered, I still know how to find things in the library. A lot of students don't know how to use the library. I think that was probably one of the greatest things I learned in summer institute because I was just walking in doing what I had to do and I was out whereas most people had to ask the librarian who had to take a lot of time to help you.

Also, however, their experiences and perspectives differ according to their socioeconomic status (SES) and family educational backgrounds. College students want to fit in, in some way that is comfortable to them. Several of these students talked about groups, sororities, fraternities and other informal cliques or groups where they found comfort. JAY talked about how students make choices. He believes:

> *Basically, it's a part of your environment. It's a part of your culture. And I do believe this firmly, that the way you are raised, who you are raised with defines your mentality; defines your....your ideas and your beliefs. Not color [Jay is bi-racial and could "pass" for white]. Some people ask me why I didn't join a white fraternity, why did I join a black fraternity? Because, they had more of the things that I believe in. So, the community that I believe in, you know. I believe in an African American community. So I will support that. And there are just certain things you feel at ease with. Like African Americans who join a white fraternity, they join it because that's who they hung around with, that's who they feel comfortable with,*

JOHANNA is Black, but not American:

> *I think about it, but I mean it's not..... I am a Black woman.....and that's another thing, the terminology, you know, should we use this, should we use that. I mean, I don't get offended if people call me African-American at all because, you know, to me it's just another term for Black. It affects a lot....I think I feel other things differently and more universally. I think, especially since my parents are the West Indian, but I wasn't born in*

the West Indies or raised in the West Indies. I was born in England, so I just had all these different perspectives on a lot of things and it keeps me thinking.

And CELESTE comes from a large family with stated educational goals for the children:

I have two families. In my mother's family there's only three of us. In my father's family there's eleven of us. Education was stressed, for everybody! ...I was always good academically just by the way I was brought up in my family. Academics were always expected in my family...

The category *African American* is used by institutions as a catch-all phrase for persons of color who do not have distinctive *international* features or language. As is the case in the larger society, however, the African American students come from all different social, economic backgrounds and ethnic combinations. *Black* students also come in all different shades of brown from the very light *passing* color of mixed lineage, to the *rich dark black* of full African descent.

As well as these differences, they come from different parts of the country and different types of locations: rural, urban, suburban.

YOCLEE speaks on these differences with some examples:

I know many of them and I know that we have....the ones that I have come in contact with, we have different views about different things. I guess because of our back..our different backgrounds.

These realities surface as issues which students have to deal with every day.

For example how...we can use things, like how we cook some of the things that we eat. Living in a projects, we're used to going down to the corner store where there is a Chinese restaurant and buy food instead of cooking.... Whereas, she 's come from a home where there was etiquette, for example where people..they sat at the table and ate. And they kept their elbows off the table and they....you know. Things like that, where we get a piece of chicken, put it in our hands and go to town. (laughter) You know and she sits. She cuts her chicken with knives and... And it was a problem for her because, you know. She sort of labeled us as savages or something.

It was these differences among the African American students on campus, along with subtle racism, choice of friends and organizations which surface as problematic for these students. The subtle racism was a daily occurrence mentioned by most students:

It is like culture shock every day. You are used to it, but it is culture shock every day. You live in your room and everything in there represents you, or it should represent you. That represents me, everything in there. Then I walk outside and it is a whole different story. It is kind of like being on a video game. Because you are walking outside and you see all of these things and you are ducking and dodging this and you are ducking and dodging that, and you are trying to avoid this stuff going on over here in the corner. So your only outlet becomes what you do in your spare time.

or from another:

But that is the way it is. It is rough. People get stressed. I am talking about stress just being on this campus, just dealing with the every day nonsense. It is actually so, what is the word I am looking for? So common that you actually forget things like the racism

every day. The people, you know, the girl sitting next to you in class and you go to ask her a question and she turns her head as if she doesn't see you. And the professor that doesn't want to call on you even though there are only two people with their hands up and things like that. You just get so tired of it day in and day out. It wears on you.

A thoughtful reflection by JOHANNA is appropriate here:

I think a lot of things affect you academically that you wouldn't really expect to affect you.

EMERGING THEMES

In the early stages of analysis, three major areas surfaced into which students remarks and concerns could be categorized: **Identity** (and how it gets sorted out), **Social interactions, and Academic interactions.** Recurrent themes within these broader categories provided starting points for my current investigation.

Identity - Black identity was an issue for each student either on an individual or group level. It was interesting to note the language that students used to talk about themselves, and non-black friends and family. Students used the terms Black and African American interchangeably. *"African American"* was always used when speaking about an individual student, however, *Black* was used when talking about a group action. They were deliberate in using "correct" terms (e.g. European American, African American, Korean, African, Cambodian) when speaking of an individual roommate or classmate.

Identity ("who I am" and "where I belong") came up in students' definitions of self, in relation to other students within-group, within-gender, with other groups.

There was also the issue of labeling and being labeled, who's doing the labeling, as well as, stereotypes maintained by society and often held by the students before they came to campus. Differences, of family background, role models and family economics among African Americans were as or more problematic for these students as the differences between White and African American students. Students struggled individually with their grades, their place on this campus, their responsibility to home. The period most commonly intense for these students was the second semester sophomore year through the first semester junior year. The struggle with who I am and why am I here was apparent for most students.

Most recent literature from Cross, W.E Jr. (1991); Helms, J.E. and Parham, T.A. (1992); King, J.E., (in press) and Hollins, E.R, (in press) provide rethinking of previous theoretical literature on Identity and Black consciousness.

Social Interaction - Socializing with and in the African American reference group was surprising for many of these students. The social activities: dances, cultural gatherings sponsored by Black organizations, membership and participation in groups and, working with the "community service projects", were the most important part of each of these students first two years on campus. The affects of relationships: "friends", different living arrangements (locations and roommates), as well as, "what's acceptable or not acceptable" socializing to African American students (re: race and interracial, where to hang- out, drinking, segregation), were reflected, according to the students, in how they "were able to handle everything

else" (KASEY, I#1) about being on this predominantly white campus. However, the overwhelming number of "majority" students was a "culture shock" to most African American students coming back in the Fall after that first Summer Institute. The subtle but constant racism was the condition that these students resented most.

The cohort of students I interviewed, had been able to form lasting friendships during the pre-college Summer Institute, among the Black choir, student organizations or among the community families and churches. Support groups as safe havens, formed in the first two or three semesters, grew more important as the years continued.

Analysis of the early data indicates a trend of "self assessment" (looking at their social and academic progress) at some time between the second semester sophomore and first semester junior year, where the students "came to terms" with themselves, their goals, achievement and persistence strategies.

Academic Interaction - Giving the students the opportunity to talk about what was important to them, using the open-ended questions, did not furnish much data on the experiences in the academic arena of campus life. Yes, there were a few comments about being the only African American in a classroom and several of the students spoke of the feeling of being ignored when they raised their hands in class. It was only on the second interviews that, because I used more specific questions, (such as "tell me about what it was like being in your classes" or "is there a particular interaction with a faculty member that comes to mind, tell me about it") I got some specific data about interactions with students in the classroom, with Teaching

Assistants and Faculty. It is the students' perception that getting through college and interacting with faculty are more difficult for students of color, than for students of the majority culture.

Some students mentioned faculty. There was not much of a mixture of remarks, positive and not so positive: "the faculty don't really interact with you" or, "Anyway, they think we can't do the work". "We always have to work harder". All of the students interviewed mentioned racism and having been affected by it either in a classroom, an administrative office, or an incident with students on campus.

Analysis of the balance of the data is ongoing and will be completed this Fall. Findings and implications for further study and suggestions for practice will be prepared for presentation early in 1995.

Notes

These Black scholars presented their studies in journal articles and books from many disciplines: social science, sociology, family studies, Negro education, psychology and social work. (Allen, 1982, 1985, and 1986; Astin, 1992; Blackwell, 1982; Braddock and Dawkins, 1981; Cross, 1981; Fleming, 1984; Hall, Mays, and Allen, 1984; Morris, 1979; Nettles et al., 1985; Smith and Allen, 1984; Thomas, 1981, 1984;).

Some of the major studies during that time (Astin, 1977, 1982; Bean, 1983, 1984; Spady, 1970; Tinto, 1975).

The reviews of the literature were comprehensive and very reflective of each period and the empirical studies which had been presented (Ajzen, and Fishbein, 1977; Feldman and Newcomb, 1969; Mow and Nettles, 1989; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991, Sedlachek, 1987).

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